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ABSTRACT

The structure of higher education in Maine and the relationship between postsecondary education leaders and legislators are considered. Maine's state system has a single governing board and a chancellor. It is suggested that the jobs of the chancellor and college presidents do not involve duplication. A postsecondary education commission was recently created in Maine to promote interinstitutional communication, which was also addressed through the medium of a 1202 commission. It is suggested that there is a need for: cooperative planning between colleges in close geographical proximity in relation to program offerings and services; long-range planning; information relevant to the specific issue being addressed; and mutual confidence between political and postsecondary education leaders. It is proposed that the best way to avoid conflict between institutions is to have a voluntary system of cooperation and that the best way to avoid program duplication is for colleges to voluntarily negotiate. (SW)

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Inservice Education Program (IEP)

Paper Presented at a Seminar for State Leaders in Postsecondary Education

STATEWIDE POSTSECONDARY AGENCIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES

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SENATOR BENNETT D. KATZ

State of Maine

St. Petersburg, Florida
January 1976

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Education Commission of the States

Inservice Education Program (IEP)
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SHEEO

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I AM VERY CLEAR IN MY MIND AS TO THE MOST IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN MY LIFE. THERE WERE FOUR; FIRST, WHEN UPON BEING COMMISSIONED A SECOND LIEUTENANT PILOT IN THE OLD ARMY AIR CORP, I BECAME A GENTLEMEN.

SECOND, WHEN I FELL IN LOVE, AND WAS MARRIED, I BECAME A HUSBAND.

THIRD, UPON THE BIRTH OF OUR FIRST CHILD I BECAME A FATHER. AND FINALLY, UPON ELECTION TO THE MAINE SENATE, I BECAME AN AUTHORITY.

NOW, AFTER SEVEN TERMS IN THE LEGISLATURE, I REALLY AM AN AUTHORITY, IN A WHOLE HOST OF AREAS, ONE OR TWO OF WHICH MAY EVEN HAVE A DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE, SUCH AS HOW TO CONTINUE MAKING A LIVING EVEN WHILE IN POLITICS.

THERE WAS A TIME I WOULD HAVE BEEN EMBARRASSED BY DELIVERING A SPEECH ON HIGHER EDUCATION PLANNING BEFORE A DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS, ALL OF WHOM PROBABLY KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SUBJECT THAN I. BUT GRADUALLY, I HAVE CONVINCED MYSELF THAT I DO BRING A PERSPECTIVE THAT IN ITSELF MIGHT MAKE A CONTRIBUTION. I AM A POLITICIAN, AND I THINK LIKE A POLITICIAN. I AM NOT SUGGESTING THAT POLITICIANS ALL THINK ALIKE, OR INDEED, THAT ALL POLITICIANS EVEN THINK. YOU KNOW BETTER. BUT WE DO RUN FOR OFFICE. WE DO REPRESENT CONSTITUENTS TO WHOM WE ARE REGULARLY ACCOUNTABLE. AND, IN MOST CASES, WE ARE CLOSE TO THE PEOPLE.

THIS ACCOUNTABILITY, WHICH IS SWIFT AND SURE, TENDS TO HELP US MAINTAIN A BALANCE BETWEEN A NECESSARY FEELING OF PERSONAL CONFIDENCE, AND A STABILIZING FEELING OF HUMILITY.

REMEMBER THAT EACH OF US IS HIRED TO DO A SPECIFIC JOB. MINE IS DIFFERENT FROM YOURS. THAT'S WHY I OBSERVE THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT WITH A VERY COLD LACK OF SYMPATHY AS THEY FINISH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THEIR NEW MEDICAL SCHOOLS, LESS THAN AN HOUR APART. THE CAPITAL COST OF THE TWO SCHOOLS MUST SURELY EXCEED A QUARTER OF A BILLION DOLLARS.

IN A DAY OF TAX RESOURCES GROWN SO SCARCE ONE NEEDS A GEIGER COUNTER TO FIND THEM, WHO MUST TAKE THE BLAME FOR THIS OUTRAGEOUS LACK OF PLANNING?

THE ANSWER ISN'T EASY, BECAUSE REGIONAL OR INTERSTATE PLANNING MAKES SO MANY SPECIAL INTERESTS VERY NERVOUS INDEED.

WHEN THE TAXPAYERS IN YOUR STATE SEE EVIDENCE OF WASTEFUL DUPLICATION, CAN THEY ZERO IN ON THE IDENTITY OF THE DECISION MAKERS?

LEGISLATORS THESE DAYS ARE OVERWHELMED WITH INFORMATION, BUT IS IT THE INFORMATION THEY WANT OR THAT THEY NEED? I FREQUENTLY GET FAR MORE VALUE OUT OF MY QUESTIONING AT THE END OF A PRESENTATION. THE QUESTIONS I WANT ANSWERED ARE NOT NECESSARILY FREELY IMPARTED BY THE PRESENTOR.

WARREN HILL TELLS ABOUT THE YOUNGSTER WHO WAS SEEMINGLY TURNED OFF COMPLETELY BY ARITHEMATIC. HIS TEACHER WAS CONSEQUENTLY DELIGHTED TO NOTE THE INTENT EXPERSSION ON THE CHILD'S FACE, AS THE TEACHER BEGAN TO ERASE THE PREVIOUS EXERCISE FROM THE BLACKBOARD. "YOU HAVE A QUESTION, JOHNNY?" HE ASKED.

"YES TEACHER, WHEN YOU ERASE THE FIGURES FROM THE BLACKBOARD, WHERE DO THEY GO?"

MOST LEGISLATORS TODAY WOULD EXPRESS KEEN INTEREST, NOT IN WHERE THE FIGURES GO, BUT WHERE THEY CAME FROM.

WHEN IT COMES TO THE ENORMOUS, UNCULLED MASS OF INFORMATION THAT INUNDATES THIS ONE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FROM AN UNSOPHISTICATED STATE IN THE NORTHEAST, I FEEL LIKE THE REVIEWER OF A NEW SCHOLARLY BOOK ON WHALES. HIS REMARKS WERE BRIEF. "THIS BOOK TELLS MORE ABOUT WHALES THAN I REALLY CARE TO KNOW".

TEN YEARS AGO, MAINE'S LEGISLATURE COMBINED OUR LAND GRANT UNIVERSITY TOGETHER WITH OUR STATE COLLEGES INTO A SINGLE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE UNDER A SINGLE BOARD OF CONTROL AND A CHANCELLOR. MOST MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY WERE AT LEAST INTELLECTUALLY OPPOSED TO IT.

THE LEGISLATURE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION WAS NOT BEING DONE IN AN ORDERLY FASHION. THE PRESIDENT WITH THE BEST SENSE OF PR WAS BRINGING HOME TOO MUCH BACON AND SOME CAMPUSES WERE BEING STARVED. TRANSFER ABILITY OF CREDITS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS WAS A SOMETIME AFFAIR. INSTITUTIONAL WANTS WERE FREQUENTLY HIGHER IN PRIORITY THAN STUDENT NEEDS.

TODAY WE HAVE A SYSTEM TEN YEARS OLD. I WISH I COULD REPORT TO YOU THAT IT IS RUNNING SUPERBLY, BUT I CANNOT. ON BALANCE, I AM SATISFIED THAT WE PURSUED THE PROPER STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE FOR US. THE LEGISLATURE HAS A UNIFIED OVERVIEW FROM A BOARD OF TRUSTEES. CAMPUS INDIVIDUALISM HAS BEEN MAINTAINED, AND IN MY VIEW, CONSIDERING OUR INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT, ACADEMIC AUTONOMY IS ALIVE AND WELL.

MY COLLEAGUES ARE CONCERNED AT THE LEVEL OF BUREAUCRACY EVIDENT IN THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE. THE QUESTION IS, DO ACCOUNTANTS AND PLANNERS IN THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE REPLACE THOSE ON THE CAMPUSES AND THEREBY SAVE DOLLARS, OR ARE THEY JUST ANOTHER LEVEL OF BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE WHICH HAS BEEN SUPER-IMPOSED, DRINKING UP PRECIOUS DOLLARS WHICH COULD BE BETTER SPENT BY THE CAMPUSES.

A PRESIDENT IS HIRED TO RUN A CAMPUS. A CHANCELLOR IS HIRED TO RUN A SYSTEM. THEIR JOBS ARE VERY DIFFERENT INDEED. BY AND LARGE, MOST LEGISLATORS SEEM TO BE WILLING TO PAY SOME BUREAUCRATIC COSTS, IF THE SYSTEM PERMITS ORDERLY USE OF LIMITED RESOURCES.

So, last year we enacted a postsecondary education commission. Why in the world would we want to do that? Well, here again we identified a vacuum. Despite the existence of a council of all college presidents or campus heads in Maine, private and public, institutions were not doing very much talking together. The smaller, weaker privates were being underpriced even as there seemed to be an insensitive expansion of the university into their areas. At legislative level, there was a great deal of sympathy for the privates and a significant hostility towards the university. It is, of course, much easier to feel kindly towards institutions which do not bug you with huge demands for appropriations.

The feeling was strong that the universitywas not voluntarily working well with the private institutions. Therefore, let us shine a very bright spotlight on the whole process of institutional inter-relationships via the medium of a 1202 commission, and see if state-wide planning cannot suggest a more orderly development of our post-secondary resources. Let us give the legislature some basic knowledge which it needs as it is called upon to rescue a failing private.

It was instructive to observe the source of institutional support and opposition to the legislation. The only warm support came from the emerging private institutions and those in troubled financial waters. The university clearly wished the bill would disappear - nor was there any visible enthusiasm from our postsecondary vocational schools or well established small, quality campus colleges. But it was enacted, and our commission has just been organized.

PERHAPS IT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO KNOW OF MY PERSONAL ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR FUTURE. WHAT DO I WANT AND EXPECT OF OUR NEW EDUCATIONAL BABY?

FIRST, PERHAPS, SOME THINGS I DON'T WANT.

1. A BIG EXPENSIVE BUREAUCRATIC LAYER WHICH BECOMES A VORACIOUS CONSUMER OF TAX DOLLARS.
2. AN AUTHORITATIVE MONSTER WHICH EXERCISES CONTROL OVER ANY CAMPUS, THEREBY DIMINISHING CAMPUS AUTONOMY.

SOME HOPES I DO HAVE.

1. THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION OF MAINE (PECOM) WILL HAVE THE SALUTORY EFFECT OF THE POLICE OFFICER STANDING AT AN INTERSECTION. THE CHANCES ARE EXCELLENT THAT NO ONE IS GOING TO GO THROUGH A RED LIGHT.

   THE OTHER DAY I GOT A REMARKABLE LETTER FROM A GOOD FRIEND WHO IS THE PRESIDENT OF ONE OF OUR UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES. I HAD PREVIOUSLY ASKED FOR A MEETING BETWEEN HIM AND THE PRESIDENT OF A NEARBY EMERGING PRIVATE INSTITUTION. THE COMPLAINT WAS THAT THE UNIVERSITY HAD JUST ANNOUNCED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW SERIES OF COURSES IN A SECTION OF THE STATE 40 MILES FROM THE CAMPUS. THE PRIVATE SCHOOL, ABOUT 30 MILES AWAY, WAS ALREADY OFFERING IDENTICAL COURSES AND HAS BEEN FOR SEVERAL YEARS. THE UNIVERSITY HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED THEIR PLANS, BUT HAD SIMPLY DONE THEIR PLANNING AND THEN MADE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. THE MEETING BETWEEN US WAS VERY FASCINATING, AND THOUGH IT ARRIVED AT NO FIRM RESOLUTION OF THE SPECIFIC PROBLEM, IN DIPLOMATIC TERMS, I FELT IT WAS VERY USEFUL.

AND NOW, THE LETTER OF WHICH I SPOKE. SINCE THE MEETING, THE INSTITUTIONS HAD BEGUN TALKING AT DEAN LEVEL. THEY WERE POLLING FACULTIES TO IDENTIFY INTEREST IN SHARING FACULTIES AS SEEMED APPROPRIATE IN CERTAIN ACADEMIC AREAS.

THEY WERE EVALUATING THE POSSIBILITY OF SAVINGS THROUGH SHARING OF HEALTH SERVICES TO THE TWO STUDENT BODIES - AND OTHER POSSIBLE BENEFITS REGARDING AVAILABILITY OF STUDENT SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ON A SHARED BASIS.

AS A LEGISLATOR, THIS MAKES MY HEART SING.

SO MY FIRST HOPE IS THAT BY SIMPLY BEING.

PECOM WILL CAUSE SOME GOOD THINGS TO HAPPEN.

2. LONG RANGE PLANNING WILL BE OF ASSISTANCE TO TRUSTEES AND CAMPUS PRESIDENTS, AND OTHERS IN MAKING INSTITUTIONAL DECISIONS.
3. PECOM WILL BE A SOURCE OF INFORMATION AS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED BY THE GOVERNOR OR LEGISLATURE, INFORMATION WHICH WILL AIDE US IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS.

I KNOW THAT MANY IN THE ACADEMIC WORLD GET VIOLENTLY UNEASY ABOUT POLITICIANS HAVING ACCESS TO TOO MUCH INFORMATION. WE MIGHT BE MISLED BY RAW DATA, THE INTERPRETATION OF WHICH IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE DATA ITSELF. EVEN GOOD OLD ALEXANDER POPE PERHAPS THINKING ABOUT THE 18TH CENTURY POLITICIAN, WROTE "A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE IS A DANGEROUS THING."

I DO NOT SHARE THIS CONCERN. WHAT I NEED IS NOT MORE DATA. I NEED RELEVANT DATA, RELEVANT TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUE THAT IS FACING ME.

4. FINALLY, AMONG THE MODEST GOALS I HAVE FOR PECOM, IT WILL STRENGTHEN A FEELING OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN POLITICAL AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION LEADERS. THIS CONFIDENCE MUST BE BASED ON IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING BY EACH PARTY OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROBLEMS OF THE OTHER. TO THE EXTENT THIS CONFIDENCE IS STRENGTHENED, THE PARTIES AND THE PUBLIC WILL BENEFIT.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE HEARD MY MODEST GOALS FOR THE EMERGING COMMISSION OF ONE STATE, PERMIT ME THE FURTHER LUXURY OF OFFERING POLITICAL ADVICE WHICH YOU MIGHT CONSIDER IN THE MONTHS AHEAD, AS YOU LIVE WITHIN THE CHANGING CONFINES OF THE POLITICAL-EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIP.

IT IS NOT ONLY NATURE THAT ABHORS A VACUUM. POLITICIANS ABHOR VACUUMS TOO. AND WHEN ONE EXISTS, YOU CAN BE VERY SURE THAT SOMEONE OR SOMETHING WILL FILL IT. THE COMPLICATING FACT IS THAT SOMETIMES IT IS NOT THE EXISTENCE OF A VACUUM, BUT RATHER ONE'S PERCEPTION OF THE EXISTENCE WHICH CAUSES A REACTION.

MANY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, INSENSITIVE TO MOUNTING CITIZEN AND LEGISLATIVE CRITICISM OF TUITION POLICIES, HAVE SEEN LEGISLATURES STEP INTO THE BATTLE BY MANDATING NEW TUITION APPROACHES. OTHER LEGISLATURES HAVE, BY MANDATING TEACHING LOADS FOR FACULTY, OR BY RESTRICTING THE ADMISSION OF OUT OF STATE STUDENTS, CLEARLY INVADED THE TERRAIN PREVIOUS THAT OF THE TRUSTEES OR CAMPUS HEADS.

ANY EDUCATOR WORTH HIS SALT, RESENTS AND RESISTS INCREASING POLITIC CONTROL OF THE ACADEMIC PROCESS. THERE IS A VERY REAL SPECTRE OF THE LOSS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM LURKING IN THE WINGS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE UNSUCCESSFULLY WRESTLING WITH SEEMINGLY INSOLUBLE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS I

OUR PRISONS, OUR MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES, OR OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, TEND TO LOSE SYMPATHY VERY PREDICTABLY WITH A CAMPUS WHICH WANTS TO GO ON DOING BUSINESS AS USUAL.

I AM HAPPY TO SAY THAT MAINE HAS BEEN FREE OF LEGISLATIVE INCURSIONS INTO THE TURF OF THE TRUSTEES.

THE TRUSTEES ARE ALERT TO THE LEGISLATIVE CLIMATE. OUR COMMUNICATIONS ARE GOOD. WE HAVE BEEN MUTUALLY SUCCESSFUL IN HEADING OFF EMOTION PACKED CONFRONTATIONS FROM HAPPENING. WE WANT TO RETAIN THE BASIC INTEGRITY OF THE INDEPENDENT GOVERNING BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITY WANTS TO BE SENSITIVE TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE LEGISLATURE ON THE OTHER.

THE RESULT IS NOT A LOVE-IN, BUT RATHER A STRONG DEDICATION BY THE PARTIES TO LIVE UP TO THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THEIR VARIOUS CONSTITUENCIES, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A RELATIONSHIP WHICH NURTURES COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING. WE HAVE OUR TENSIONS, OUR DISAGREEMENTS, BUT NOT ONCE HAS THE LEGISLATURE GONE ALONG WITH THE SMALL MINORITY WHICH SUPPORTS THE KIND OF POLITICAL SIGNAL CALLING FOUND INCREASINGLY IN SOME STATES.

SO MY POLITICAL ADVICE IS, THE BEST WAY TO AVOID THE HIGH COST OF POLITICAL CONFRONTATIONS IS TO NOT LET THEM HAPPEN.

THE BEST WAY TO AVOID A BITTER HASSLE ABOUT THE LACK OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION IS TO HAVE AN ONGOING VOLUNTARY SYSTEM OF SUCH COOPERATION.

THE BEST WAY TO AVOID LEGISLATIVELY MANDATED TERMINATION OF EXPENSIVE DUPLICATIVE PROGRAMS, IS THE VOLUNTARY NEGOTIATION BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS TO USE LIMITED RESOURCES MORE SENSIBLY.

A LEGISLATOR WHO BELIEVES IN AND IS SUPPORTIVE OF THE GOALS AND BENEFITS OF POSTSECONDARY FEELS BETRAYED BY SOME OF THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY - OR, MORE FREQUENTLY, DON'T PLAY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, WHEN THE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IDENTIFIES ITS POTENTIAL TO CONTRACT FOR UNUSED SPACE OR TALENT IN THE NEARBY PRIVATE INSTITUTION, AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO BUILDING A NEW BULIDING OR HIRING NEW FACULTY, THIS RESTORES CONFIDENCE IN GOOD MEASURE.

IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, IT IS THE OLD STORY OF PEOPLE TALKING TOGETHER AND NEGOTIATING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WAR.

HOW OFTEN IN LIFE WE HAVE SEEN THE MISCHIEF CAUSED BY POOR COMMUNICATION AND MISUNDERSTANDING.

REVEREND POTTS FROM WEST GRANVILLE CENTRE, MAINE LEARNED THIS LESSON WELL.

EARLIER THIS MONTH, WEST GRANVILLE CENTRE WAS BLANKETED BY THE KIND OF DRY WHITE SNOW THAT BLINDS YOU HAPPILY IN THE BRILLANCE OF THE POST STORM SUNSHINE. EVERYONE WAS OUT IN THEIR COLORFUL SNOWMOBILES, AND THE REVEREND POTTS DECIDED THAT THIS WOULD BE A FINE TIME TO BRING FORTH HIS SNOWMOBILE SERMON, WHICH SPOKE APPROVINGLY OF FAMILY GROUPS JOINING WITH NEIGHBORS ON CROSS-COUNTRY TRAILS. HE APPROVED THE TOGETHERNESS OF FAMILIES HAVING FUN IN A SETTING SO CLOSE TO NATURE.

SALLY POTTS DISAGREED. "OUR PARISHIONERS ARE ALL VETERAN SNOWMOBILERS," MRS. POTTS POINTED OUT. "IT'S A SUBJECT THAT YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT, AND YOU MOST CERTAINLY ARE GOING TO MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF. SO IF YOU ARE DELIVERING A SERMON ON SNOWMOBILING ON SUNDAY, I CERTAINLY AM NOT GOING TO CHURCH TO WATCH YOU MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF!"

ON SUNDAY, AS MR. POTTS WALKED TO CHURCH, WITHOUT MRS. POTTS AT HIS SIDE FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME SINCE THEY HAD COME TO THE PARISH LAST SPRING, HE THOUGHT OF HER CRITICISM, AND SUDDENTLY HAD A VISION THAT SHE WAS PROBABLY RIGHT.

WHEN HE ROSE TO THE PULPIT, BEFORE HIS CONGREGATION, HE HAD AN ALTERNATIVE SERMON BEFORE HIM, WHICH HE PROCEEDED TO DELIVER ON SEX.

HE SPOKE CONVINCINGLY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE, AND THE EVOLVING RICHNESS OF MARITAL SEX - THEN TIED TOGETHER THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN MORALITY. IT WAS A GOOD SERMON AND IT WAS VERY CLEAR BY THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH THAT IT WAS WELL-RECEIVED.

MARTHA HIBBLE HURRIED FROM THE CHURCH TO GET HOME BEFORE HER FAMILY, JUST AS SALLY POTTS WAS APPROACHING TO JOIN THE REVEREND POTTS.

"YOUR HUSBAND'S SERMON WAS WONDERFUL," MARTHA HIBBLE SAID.

"YOU'RE JOKING," MRS. POTTS SAID.

"NOT AT ALL," MRS. HIBBLE RESPONDED. "THE SERMON WENT OVER VERY WELL! ONE OF HIS BEST!"

"I CAN'T BELIEVE IT," MRS. POTTS SAID INCREDULOUSLY. "HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SUBJECT! HE HAS ONLY DONE IT TWICE IN HIS LIFE! ONCE BEFORE WE GOT MARRIED, AND ONCE AFTER! AND HE FELL OFF BOTH TIMES!"

TONIGHT I BRING YOU BEST WISHES FROM WEST GRANVILLE CENTRE, MAINE, AND FROM MY FRIENDS THE REVEREND MR. POTTS AND HIS WIFE SALLY.

THEY HAVE ASKED ME TO REMIND YOU TO COMMUNICATE CLEARLY TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING. IF YOU ARE EVER IN MAINE, YOU WOULD ENJOY VISITING THE POTTS. THEY HAVE JUST BOUGHT A SNOWMOBILE.

/CED
1/28/76